

A PhD student from Kazan Federal University (Russia), Aidar Zinnatullin, spent 6-month mobility study at the Center for East-Central and Balkan Europe of the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Bologna (Forli Campus). After finishing his mobility he decided to share his feelings and thoughts about study and research opportunities at UNIBO:

“My story of the 6-month mobility study at the University of Bologna started as usual for such kind of things. Being studied PhD program in political science at the Kazan Federal University, I looked through the materials of the Foreign Department at my university and I was very delighted to find the opportunity of spending one semester learning political science at the University of Bologna through the Erasmus+ program. I have decided to apply for this program because at that time I was absolutely confident that such kind of experience would strongly enrich my future studies and help me to understand essential parts of my research project. And I definitely can say that it did!

Let me start from more general lines. The theme of my dissertation is «Party policy positions in democratic regimes». My research is devoted to the analysis of the relationship between positions of political parties and different factors that may determine it. Although a number of issues have been analyzed and discussed, much remains to be done in the field of interrelations between external (public opinion, party system, electoral defeat) and internal (the role of party members in decision-making process, party discipline etc.) factors which may affect on party policy positions. Overall aim of my research project during this semester mobility was to define factors that determine party policy positions in competitive political regimes.

The Department of Political and Social Sciences at the University of Bologna – Forli Campus gave me a great opportunity to carry out my research project in the best way possible. Here I collected all necessary data from relevant sources, analyzed it and prepared three publications. Interviews with excellent experts in party politics, electoral competition allowed me to deeply understand the character of Italian party system. During my semester mobility I interviewed

excellent experts in the field of Italian party politics and methodology. Professors Salvatore Vassallo, Filippo Tronconi, Piero Ignazi, Lucio Picci helped me to deeply analyze the theme and make interesting revelations. In addition during the mobility I passed the course called “Quantitative methods for Social Research” which was taught by professor Lucio Picci. He also helped me in preparing methodological part of my research with his very useful advices regarding time-series analysis of the data.

Finally, this semester gave me a chance to deepen my knowledge in political science in the inspiring, creative, and cosmopolite environment of one of the largest European universities. I am confident that my experience at the University of Bologna will be valuable for both my studies and overall general development”.